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# ALASKA:

A SKETCH

OF THE

COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE.

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# ALASKA:

## THE COUNTRY AND ITS INHABITANTS.

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### I.

WHEN we suggest the propriety, and the almost necessity, of adding to the Mission territory of the Church a new field as large as the whole area of the thirteen original States, we shall suggest at the same time no doubt two very important questions—first, Where is this your proposed new field? And second, Has not the Church already in her charge more than she can well attend to? If we undertake to answer these questions, we shall take the second first, and our answer is, that the more the Church can be brought to attempt in the way of Mission work, provided it can be shown that there is a reasonable responsibility resting upon her to do that work, the more ready will she be found to respond. The Church, with her weak Eastern Dioceses and her vast Western jurisdictions, certainly has a great deal before her; but after all, what is that which is before her compared to that which is behind her, Pentecost, the Mount of Mission, Calvary, and Gethsemane? She needs only to assume her full responsibility as it develops, and put full faith in her children, and the work undertaken will be done.

And the other question is to be answered by that mysterious word, Alaska, otherwise known to the people of the United States as “Seward’s Folly.” On the 28th day of May, 1867, a treaty was ratified by the United States Senate which, for the consideration of the payment of \$7,200,000, conveyed to the United States full possession of 580,107 square miles of territory somewhere in the unknown region of the great North-west. The map showed that there was such a territory, and that it was called Alaska, but that was about all the knowledge that was given or asked for by the people in general. They considered it a very foolish purchase, and never expected to hear any more of it, or take any particular interest in its affairs. And to this day, to question any one upon Alaska is to find that his acquaintance with the country is confined almost exclusively to items of news that have come from Sitka, Fort Wrangel, or the more fertile portions of the Aleutian district. All the vast interior of the country is as yet a sealed book to the American citizen.

*The Country*—Alaska includes all that territory lying between lat.  $54^{\circ} 40'$  and  $72^{\circ}$ , a distance north and south of 1,400 miles; and between long.  $130^{\circ}$  and  $190^{\circ}$  (which, according to the treaty, was made the dividing line between Asia and Alaska), distance east and west, of 2,200 miles. The coast line of this country extends 25,000 miles, being two and one-half times more than the Atlantic and Pacific coast line of the whole United States besides. The western-

most island of the Aleutian group is as far west of San Francisco as the coast of Maine is east of that city, making San Francisco the middle city between the Eastern and Western extremes of our territory.

*Divisions*—There are three districts within these limits. (a) The Sitkan, or south-eastern Alaska; (b) the Aleutian, embracing the Alaskan Peninsula, and the islands west of long. 155°; and (c) the Yukon, extending from the Alaskan Mountains to the Arctic Ocean. Of the Yukon district very little comparatively is known, except through the reports of the United States Coast Survey and the journals of Missionaries, from which we shall draw hereafter. Its general conformation is moorland, very fertile where naturally drained, and abounding in mountains and lakes. Its chief commercial value is in its furs.

The Aleutian district is mainly of volcanic formation and mountainous. There is no timber at all except at the eastern end, but in some portions the climate and soil are excellent for grazing, and one authority predicts that the district will yet furnish California with its best dairy products.

The Sitkan district is almost entirely mountainous and covered with dense forests, rich in natural soil, favorable in climate and seamed with valuable mineral veins.

*Mountains*—The coast range of California and the Rocky Mountains unite in Alaska to form the Alaska range, which extends down the Peninsula and sinks into the Pacific, leaving only the highest peaks exposed. There are over sixty volcanoes that have been active since the country was settled by Europeans; and in height they vary, from Mt. St. Elias, 19,500 feet, to Altu, the westernmost of the group, 3,084 feet. This is also the great glacier region, and in one of the gulches of Mt. Fairweather there is a glacier which extends fifty miles out into the sea and ends in a solid ice-wall 300 feet high and eight miles broad.

*Islands*—The Southern coast is a vast archipelago. From Puget's Sound, the terminus of the Northern Pacific R. R., one can sail for a thousand miles through inside channels, the islands forming a complete breakwater, bays and harbors on all sides, and yet the channel is too deep to anchor, and the mountains rising up from the very water's edge to the height of 1,000 to 8,000 feet. The natural features of the coast on this voyage are so wonderful that their beauty has only to be known to make the trip one of the most attractive and every way enjoyable summer voyages that could be devised. The most important groups of islands are the Alexander Archipelago, with 1,100 islands; the Kadiak, 5,676 square miles; the Shumagin, 1,031 square miles; the Aleutian, 6,391 square miles, and the Sea Islands of Pribyloff, 3,963 square miles.

One of the largest rivers in the world is the Yukon, which is seventy miles wide at its mouth, and for the first thousand miles from one to five miles wide. It is navigable for 1,500 miles and more, and is over 2,000 miles long. The people on its bank call themselves "Men of Yukon," as if that were distinction enough.

The Kuskokwim, 600 miles long; the Stickeen and Tanana, each 250, and the Chilcat, Copper, Fire, Mushergak, Nowikakat and Porcupine, each 150 and over, are the other principal streams.

*Resources—Furs.* The Alaskan Commercial Company in 1868 leased the Pribyloff Islands of the Government at an annual rental of \$55,000 and a royalty of \$262,500 a year on the 100,000 seal skins allowed by law to be taken. The revenue from two islands alone from 1871-1880 was over \$2,500,000. Beside the seal-furs, the otter, mink, beaver and other skins give an annual revenue of over \$1,500,000.

*Fish*—Salmon, cod, herring, halibut, etc., in catching which in the season from 5,000 to 10,000 Indians are actively employed.

*Coal*—In abundance, and of excellent quality and unlimited quantity, especially at Cook's Inlet, near St. Paul's Island.

*Timber*—Mr. Seward predicted that this region would become the shipyard for the American Continent, and shortly for the whole world. There are thousands of square miles of densest forest of cedar, spruce, hemlock and fir, covering the south-eastern section of Alaska.

*Minerals*—Gold, silver, iron, copper and marble are there in large deposits. Petroleum is abundant on the Copper River. Fire-clay, gypsum, sulphur inexhaustible; amethysts, garnets, agates, carnelians and fossil ivory.

*Climate*—Every diversity of climate is to be found here. In Central Alaska, at Fort Yukon, which is the trading station of the Hudson's Bay Company, the thermometer often goes above 100° in summer and from 50°-70° below zero in winter. The snowfall in this region averages eight feet, and often reaches twelve feet. Among the islands and on the southern coast the climate is very much like that of North-western Scotland. For five years the greatest cold reported was zero, and the greatest heat 77°. There were only fifty-three entirely clear days in seven years.

At St. Paul's, Kadiak, the mean summer temperature was 54° and winter 29°. At Sitka, 54° 6' summer, and 32° 5' winter. In only four winters out of forty-five at Sitka did the thermometer go below zero. Thus the winter climate of Southern Alaska is the same with that of Kentucky and West Virginia, the mildness of course being due to the trend of the Japan Kuro-Siwo, or Gulf Stream.

*Population*—The general divisions of the native population are four—(1) Koloshians; (2) Kenaian; (3) Aleuts; (4) Eskimo. Of the first there are about 25,000; of the second 25,000; of the third 10,000, and of the fourth 20,000, or between 60,000 and 70,000 in all. The Russian estimate at the time of the treaty was 66,000. The Special Indian Commissioner to Alaska reported of these Indians that if three-fourths of them were to be landed in New York they would be classed with the most intelligent of the emigrants that arrived there. St. Paul, on Kadiak Island, discovered in 1763, was for some time the capital of Russian America, but in 1832 Baron Wrangel transformed the seat of government to Sitka. At these two places therefore the natives are to be seen at their best estates. All on the southern coast speak the same language, called the "Thlinklet." Their religion is a feeble polytheism, practically resolving itself into demonolatry or Shamanism, offerings to evil spirits to keep them from doing mischief to the offerer. It is the old Tartar worship before Buddhism was introduced. The Shaman is the medicine man of the

family, and if the sons of Rechab were commended for their fidelity to Jondab's command not to drink wine, the Thlinklets are no less faithful in their obedience to the Shamans, who forbade them long ago to eat blubber, and to this day they look upon it with the greatest abhorrence. Polygamy is practiced among the rich, and their women are slaves to be bought with blankets. On the upper Yukon the widow ascends the funeral pile and sits besides her dead husband's body until she is almost suffocated, and then is obliged to collect the clothes of her husband's body from the coals and wear them in a bag hung about her neck for two years. The aged are stoned or speared and thrown to the dogs.

The Kenaïans inhabit the peninsula of Kenai, between Cook's Inlet and Prince William's Sound. But very little is known of their tribal divisions and habits, except that they are generally peaceful and well-disposed. The *Aleuts* were the chief disciples of the Russian Mission, living on the islands and the Alaskan Peninsula, and the most advanced of all toward civilization. The remainder of the population along Behring's Straits, the Arctic coast, and on the Yukon river and its tributaries are Eskimos—like the Eskimo in other parts of the world, low in the scale of humanity, but peaceable and anxious to learn from the Missionaries.

*Towns*—Fort Wrangel, a village of one hundred houses, with about one hundred whites and five hundred Indians, though this is much increased in winter by the incoming of the miners and Indians from the fisheries to the number of 3,000 or 4,000. *Unalashka*, the most important trading-post of "The Commercial Co." St. Paul, Kadiak, which has schools and a hospital, and *Sitka*, or New Archangel, the headquarters of the present, as it was of the former, government, has about 1,500 inhabitants. It is a port of entry, the whole territory having been constituted a revenue district, which is literally *all* that has been done by the Government toward recognizing the possibilities of its new possession. No provision has ever been made to establish a territorial rule, and except for the fact of the cession and military possession following up the treaty in October, 1867, Alaska, so far as the interest taken in its affairs goes, might as well be ceded to the Eskimos and be done with it. But when we turn to the religious side of the question, we shall see, as it is hoped we shall prove in another article, that a great deal of interest, and a vast amount of severe faithful labor, has been expended, which is bringing forth good fruit, and has no limit to its capacity for increased fruitage; and that if China and Japan are worth a Bishop and a band of Missionaries to express and extend the fostering zeal and care of the Church, it is surely time that the first Bishop of Alaska from the Church in these United States was sent out, with a score of faithful Priests and Deacons to second him, to care for the souls of those who have been already born again into CHRIST, and to preach the Gospel of the Resurrection among the prairies, mountains, islands and frozen ice-fields of Alaska.



## II.

### ITS MISSIONS OF THE PAST—RUSSIAN MISSIONS.

It is to be supposed that, with our own experience as a Church before us, we know what to expect in the way of delays and disappointments between the first sowing of the seed in a foreign and hostile soil and any satisfactory harvesting of the fruits. It has taken half a century in China and Japan already to establish our Church as in any sense a satisfactory Mission, and even now there are not wanting those who say that the whole work is a failure, and the sooner we can gracefully back out of it the better it will be for the credit of the Church. Nor will any one familiar with the spiritual obstacles that Missionaries encounter expect that characters that shall be Christian from highest principle and through and through will be formed in the first, or even the second, generation of converts, as a rule, though every Mission field furnishes shining exceptions to this rule.

We shall not be disheartened, then, when we come to look into the history of Missions in Alaska, if the present state of society there is found to be slightly SAVAGE still; nor give up hope of doing good, because we find unfavorable criticisms upon the work of other religious bodies already done, and sneers at the results claimed as conversions, in the writings of those who have, from an outside point, surveyed the field. But, that no charge of bias or prejudice may hold, we shall give in brief, from an undoubted authority, a short sketch of native character at this day and a review of the results of Mission work. It will be understood that the people spoken of are the Indians or Aleuts, and the Missionary agency is the Russo-Greek Church.

Dall, in his work, "Alaska and Its Resources," speaking of the Indian character, says: "They are hospitable, good-humored, but not always trustworthy. They will steal, and have sometimes attacked small vessels in the straits. . . . They sometimes have as many as five wives, though one or two is the usual number. . . . Drunkenness is a common vice among them. They have an uncontrollable passion for alcohol, which is plentifully supplied to them by the whalers and traders." (How our own Indian Missionary will appreciate this feature of the difficulty of Mission work there!) "They hate the Russians, and will not trade with them. . . . Their customs in regard to the treatment of the old and infirm are, from a civilized point of view, brutal and inhuman. . . . When an old person was sick for more than seven days the others put a rope around his body, and dragged him by it around the house over the stones. If this did not kill or cure, the sick person was taken to the place of the dead. . . . Here the individual was stoned or speared, and the body left for the dogs to devour, the latter being themselves eaten by the natives." Of the Aleuts proper he says: "Since the time of their first intercourse with the Russians, their char-

acter, habits, mode of life, and even their very name, have been totally changed. Originally they were active, sprightly, and fond of dances and festivals. Their mode of worship partook more of the character of a religion than that of any of the tribes, which still remain unchanged. Ground into the very dust by the oppression of ruthless invaders, their religious rites, gay festivals and determined character have all passed away. A shade of melancholy is now one of their national characteristics. All speak some Russian, and many of them can converse fluently in that language. The Aleuts are light, and nearly the same color as the Innuits of the Northwest. Their features, perhaps, from the great admixture of Russian blood, are more intelligent and pleasing. They are all nominally Greek Catholics, but there is very little knowledge of the principles of true Christianity amongst them. While further advanced than any other native American tribe, they are far from civilized, except in dress, and require careful guardianship and improved methods of education to preserve them from the rapacity of the traders. The reality of their devotion to a religion which they do not comprehend may well be doubted." He then quotes Veniaminoff's description of the native character, with the comment that it is marked by partiality confessed, and is mainly due to his goodness of heart and love for the people. . . . In another place, speaking of Mission work not Russian, he says: "In the evening, the Indians, old and young, gathered in the fort yard and sang several hymns with excellent effect. Altogether it was a scene which would have delighted the hearts of many very good people who know nothing of Indian character, and as such will doubtless figure in some Missionary report. To any one who at all understood the situation, however, the absurdity of the proceeding was so palpable that it appeared almost like blasphemy. Old Sakhuiti, who has at least eighteen wives, whose hands are bloody with repeated and most atrocious murders, who knows nothing of what we understand by right and wrong, by a future state of rewards and punishments, or by a Supreme Being—this old heathen was singing as sweetly as his voice would allow, and with quite as much comprehension of the hymn as the dogs in the yard. Indians are fond of singing; they are also fond of tobacco; and for a pipeful apiece you may baptize a whole tribe of them. Why will intelligent men still go on, talking three or four times a year to Indians on doctrinal subjects by means of a jargon which cannot express an abstract idea, and the use of which only throws ridicule on sacred things, and still call such work spreading the truths of Christianity? When the Missionary will leave the trading-posts, strike out into the wilderness, live with the Indians, teach them cleanliness first, morality next, and by slow and simple teaching lead their thoughts above the hunt or the camp—then, and not until then, will they be competent to comprehend the simplest principles of right and wrong." (The paragraph before this last is quoted for the benefit of the Professors in our future Alaska Divinity School, and the last for the guidance of our pioneer Alaskan Bishop and his Missioners.)

Having freed ourselves from the danger of a possible charge of prejudice and ignorance by quoting so freely from outside authority, we are at liberty to take up historically the Mission of the Russian Church in Alaska.

The history of the early dealings of the Russian expeditions with the natives is one of continued outrages and retaliations. Almost every record of voyages for discovery or trading from 1648-1800 tells of atrocities committed by the sailors and of wholesale massacres by the natives. The sole purposes of these expeditions was gain, and no attempt was made even to conciliate, much less to evangelize, the Indians. It was not until 1793 that a ukase was issued by the Empress of Russia authorizing the introduction of Missionaries into the American colonies, but unfortunately the same ukase ordered the shipment thither of convicts from Russia, and was obeyed in the proportion of a hundred convicts to one Missionary. In 1794 (May) Shlikoff brought over 190 emigrant convicts, two overseers and eleven monks, and Ióasaph, Elder of the Augustine Friars, was invited to settle in the colony. All the monks were obliged to support themselves by constant work, as no provision was made for them by the Government, and Ióasaph complained bitterly of the treatment they received from the Shlikoff Trading Company's officials. At the same time, in 1795, one year after his landing, he reported the conversion of 1,200 natives, thus quite justifying the hard criticisms quoted above. The census of this colony of Kadiák in the same year gave a population of 3,600 natives. In 1796 Father Ióasaph was made Bishop by Imperial ukase, and returned to Irkutsk to receive his consecration. Father Iuvenáti was murdered by the natives for attempting to put down polygamy. The first Russo-Greek Church was built at Kadiák during this year. In 1799 Bishop Ióasaph, with a company of Clergy, set sail for his new Diocese in the ship "Fenie," which was lost at sea with all on board, and from this time to 1810 only one monk was left in the colonies. On the 10th of June, 1810, Captain Golófnin brought one Priest to Sitka in his sloop of war Diana, and in 1816 Father Sblokkoff arrived from Moscow, and took charge of all the Mission work in the colonies. There were at the death of Governor Baránoff in 1819 five colonies of the Company in the Aleutian Isles, four on Cook's Inlet, two on Chujách Gulf, and one on Baránoff Island, in Sitka Bay, with three Priests in charge, three chapels and several schools, where, however, nothing was taught except reading and writing in the ecclesiastical characters. Father Mordófski reached Kadiák in 1823, and in 1824 the real history of the Mission begins with the arrival of the noble and devoted Innocentius Veniamínoff, the Russian Selwyn, at Unaláshka, and the commencement of his life-long labors among the Aleuts. He was made Bishop and transferred to Sitka in 1834, and the record of his life gives all that there is to be said about the progress of religious work among the natives, so far as the Russian Church is concerned, up to the time of the transfer of the Territory to the United States. Mr. Dall's estimate of his labors is well worth quoting here to counterbalance some other quotations that have been made from his book. He says, "Whatever of good is ingrained in their [the natives] characters may be in great part traced to the persevering efforts of one man. This person was the Rev. Father Innocentius Veniamínoff, of the Irkutsk Seminary, since Bishop of Kamchatka. He alone of the Greek Missionaries to Alaska has left behind him an undying record of devotion, self-sacrifice and love, both to God and man, combined with the true Missionary fire."

John Veniaminoff was born September 1st, 1797, graduated from the Seminary at Irkutsk in 1817, and was ordained in May of that year. He was advanced to the priesthood in 1821, made Bishop of Kamchatka in 1840, and took the title of Innocent. In 1850 his see was made Archi-Episcopal, and in 1868 he was recalled to Russia and made successor of Philaret as Metropolitan of Moscow. In 1823 he offered himself as a Missionary, and was sent by his Bishop to Unalashka. The following extracts from his own published account of his Mission ("The Founding of the Orthodox Church in Russian America," St. Petersburg, 1840) will give the best idea of what he had to do, and how well he did it:

"Although the Aleuts willingly embraced the Christian religion, and prayed to God as they were taught, it must be confessed that, until a Priest was settled amongst them, they worshipped one who was almost an unknown God. For Father Macarius, from the shortness of time that he was with them, and from the lack of competent interpreters, was able to give them but very general ideas about religion, such as of God's omnipotence, His goodness, etc. Notwithstanding all of which the Aleutines remained Christians, and after baptism completely renounced Shamanism, and not only destroyed all the masks which they used in their heathen worship, but also allowed the songs which might in any way remind them of their heathen worship to fall into disuse, so that when, on my arrival amongst them, I through curiosity made inquiry after these songs, I could not hear of one. But of all good qualities of the Aleutines, nothing so pleased and delighted my heart as their desire, or, to speak more justly, *thirst*, for the Word of God, so that sooner would an indefatigable Missionary tire of *preaching* than they of *hearing* the Word." But Veniaminoff, true Missionary that he was, was not content with his quiet, peaceful labors among the Aleuts. There was a fierce tribe that hunted the Russians like wild beasts in the neighborhood of Sitka, and to them he determined to carry the Gospel. He began to get ready for his Mission to these Koloshes in 1834, but was detained a year, and at last, ashamed of himself for his cowardice, he resolved that immediately upon the close of the Christmas holidays he would take his life in his hand and go. "Four days before I came to the Koloshes," he says, "the small-pox broke out among them. Had I begun my instruction before the appearance of the small-pox they would certainly have blamed me for all the evil which came upon them, as if I were a Russian Shaman, or sorcerer, who sent such a plague amongst them. But Glory be to God, who orders all things for good." (Think of thanking God for opening such a *door of entrance*, a door from whose opening in such a place any one but a man of iron nerves and complete self-surrender would have fled away and thanked God for his escape!) "The Koloshes were not what they were two years previously" (when he *meant* to come among them). "Few were baptized then, for, while I proclaimed the truth to them, I never urged upon them, or wished to urge upon them, the immediate reception of Holy Baptism, but, seeking to convince their judgment, I awaited a request from them. Those who expressed a desire to be baptized I received with full satisfaction." After sixteen years of Missionary toil in such

a field Veniaminoff was sent to St. Petersburg to plead for help for the Mission. The Czar proposed to the Synod to send him back as a Bishop, but that body objected, because, though he was an excellent man, he had "no Cathedral, no body of Clergy, and no Episcopal residence." "The more, then, like an Apostle," said the Czar, and he was consecrated. No sooner was he consecrated than he was impatient to get back to his see, and on April 30th, 1842, he writes: "At last, thank the LORD GOD, in America! Our doings since we came to Sitka (September 26th) have not yet been very important. A Mission was sent to Noushtau, which will reach its destination not sooner than the *middle of next June*. December 17th a sort of Theological School was opened, containing now 23 persons, creoles and natives. The theological student I. T. was sent to Kadiak to learn the language, and in four months has had wonderful success. The monk M. has been preaching to the Koloshes, and — has about 80 candidates for Holy Baptism, and asks it for them; but I do not care to be over hasty with them. The more and the better they are taught, the more can they be depended upon. I went this spring to Kadiak to examine into the affairs of the church there, and was comforted beyond expectation. The church is full every holy day, and Lent was kept by more than four hundred of them, some coming from distant places."

April 5, 1844.—"The children here [at Sitka] between the ages of one and eighteen are very numerous. In the Theological School, in the Company's School, and in two Girls' Schools, there are about 140, and yet I gathered about 150 others." He reports 400 children under instruction and 35 adults baptized at their own request. 1845.—The Kwichpak Church numbered 270 natives and 30 foreigners. Priests visited the Kenai and Koetchan tribes, staying with them some months and baptizing several converts. And so the good Bishop went on from year to year, as the Russian Mouravieff says, "Sailing over the ocean, or driving in reindeer sledges over his vast, but thinly settled Diocese, thousands of miles in extent, everywhere baptizing the natives, for whom he has introduced the use of letters and translated the Gospel into the tongue of the Aleutines."

"The good Bishop has little to say of himself. We are told he became master of six dialects, spoken in the field committed to his charge. He himself translated, or assisted others in translating, large parts of God's Word and the liturgy of his Church for the use of the natives. For forty-five years, ten of them as Bishop of Kamchatka, eighteen more as its Archbishop, he labored on, in season and out of season." (Hale's Innocent of Moscow.) And when, in 1867, Philaret died and Innocent was chosen Patriarch of Moscow, one of the first works he undertook was the organization of the Orthodox Missionary Society, which was the cause of as much good at home in awakening the spirit of Missions in the Church as it was abroad in supporting the work in distant fields. This Society in 1877 raised and expended 141,698.65½ roubles in Missionary work.

The following statistics are taken from a report in the *Mission Journal* of Irkutsk: "There are in the Diocese of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska,

including about 200 Slaves and Greeks at San Francisco, 11,572 members of the Eastern Church. The church buildings are 9—viz., at San Francisco, at Sitka (where there are about 300 Orthodox), at Kadiak, at Kenai, at Bielkoffsky, at Unalashka, at Nonschatchak, on the Island of St. Paul, and at the Michaeloffsky Redoubt at Kwichpak. There are two vacancies among the Clergy at Sitka and at the Kenai Mission."

Bishop Iohn succeeded Innocent, but soon returned to Russia. Bishop Nestor, a man of ability, went out in 1879. He died in 1880, and has had no successor. The most influential Russians left the country when the Territory was ceded, and interest in the Missions has largely been withdrawn, so that in the last two reports of the Orthodox Missionary Society no mention whatever is made of Alaskan Missions. Without doubt, while, according to the terms of sale, all the Church property is reserved for the exclusive use of the Orthodox congregations, time will work it that the field will gradually be abandoned by the Russian Church, and will, if we do not claim and cultivate it, eventually fall into the hands of the sects.

And this brings us to speak of another work going on there—viz., the Mission of the Presbyterians. On the 10th of August, 1877, the Rev. Sheldon Jackson and Mrs. McFarland reached Fort Wrangel as the first Missionaries of the Presbyterian body to Alaska. Mr. Jackson reports that one of the first sights he saw was an Indian ringing a bell to call the people to school. The Indian was Clah, from Fort Simpson, and about 20 pupils attended. The Lord's Prayer was recited in Chinook jargon (a mixture of French-Canadian, English, and Indian words), and the long metre doxology sung at closing. The book-stock inventoried four Bibles, four hymn-books (Moody and Sankey), three primers, thirteen first readers, and one wall chart. Twelve thousand dollars were raised as a special fund by Mr. Jackson's efforts at home, and two other Missionaries were sent out in 1878. In 1880 one Missionary and one teacher went to Alaska. In 1879 the Mission buildings were erected, and the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Wrangel organized. The Mission includes a church building, a Girls' Industrial Home and school-houses, with stations among the Chilcats, Hydahs and Hoonyahs, neighboring tribes. There are at present three Ministers and five male and female teachers at the different stations.

To provide for the Swedes and Germans in the employ of the Russian American Fur Company, a Lutheran Minister was sent to Sitka in 1845 and remained until 1852. He was succeeded by the Rev. Mr. Nintec, preaching in Swedish and German, who remained until the transfer in 1867, when, his support being withdrawn by the Russian Government, he returned to Europe.

A Roman Catholic Bishop, with one Priest, also came to Fort Wrangel in 1879 to establish a Mission, but it is believed that the work has now been stopped and the Priest withdrawn.

It must be remembered that all that has been cited of the Missions so far has only to do with the Indians in the neighborhood of Sitka and Fort Wrangel, along the southern coast, and on the Lower Yukon. The next paper will tell something of the work of the Church of England on the Upper Yukon and among the Eskimo. But, so far, the great continent, with its vast and

almost unexplored interior, has only been trimmed around the edges. Full 40,000 of the possible 60,000 natives are yet without Christianity, and one might as well establish a Mission in Cuba to evangelize Spain, or in the Jerseys to reach the Mahometans, as to sit down in a Mission at Sitka and hope to reach the scattered tribes of Alaska. If we should send Missionaries to that neighborhood it would only be to make of it a Fort *Wrangel* indeed, but the whole country is open to us, and on the Grand Yukon and its tributaries and among the Eskimos of the northern coast there is work enough, yet untouched, for all the men the Church could send.

### III.

#### THE MISSIONS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Alaska has been invaded from another quarter in the interests of the Cross. The Church of England, since the revival of the Missionary spirit in the early part of this century, has never been content to sit down in any locality and confine herself to work there, simply because her territorial limits were near at hand. Her Missionaries have the spirit of Disraeli, and are ever looking around for new worlds on a small scale to conquer. One would think that the British possessions in North America, which comprise an area of 4,000,000 square miles, a territory larger than the whole of Europe, might have afforded room for the tireless labors of these zealous men, and that they might have thought the hardships and discomforts of the Red River or the distant Mackenzie enough, without taking little trips of a thousand and fifteen hundred miles to the Yukon. Two hundred and fifty thousand Indians are under the charge of the small band of Bishops and Clergy that is scattered over this vast region, but the spirit of the MASTER was in His disciples, and they were ever ready to leave the ninety and nine sheep in the wilderness and go after that one which was lost until they found it.

The Church Missionary Society of the Church of England has made Missions to the Indians its peculiar care, and has labored almost alone among them. More than sixty years have passed away since its first Missionaries penetrated into the then remote regions of the Red River.

In 1820 the Rev. John West was sent as Chaplain of the Hudson's Bay Company with instructions to live at Red River, and, in addition to his other duties, to do all he could to better the temporal and spiritual condition of the Indians in that region. This he did so faithfully that help was soon needed to prosecute the work, and in 1825 the Rev. W. Cochran was appointed to minister entirely to the Indians. It is to his exertions mainly that we must attribute much of the success which has from the first attended the Missions in that country. Another item, however, that entered largely into that success was the fact that the treatment of the Indians in the territories belonging to the British Government has been of a different order from that which prevailed in Alaska under the Russians, and one does not have to interlard the history of the country since 1820 with accounts of forts and trading posts burned and garrisons massacred. The Indians did burn forts once in a while, but they only did it for fun, and because the Russian traders had put them up to it. Another Selwyn was this William Cochrane, who never left his chosen field until he died there, after forty years of faithful labor of the severest sort, leaving a memory dear to all. How easy it is to write that "forty years," but who except him who endured it, and the Lord who sent him and took him away in His own good time, can sum up the labors, privations, dangers and



the terrible loneliness of those years in the far-off wilderness, and measure the patient endurance that carried him even to the end ?

From Red River as a centre, stations were gradually planted east, west and north as the way opened, the men to occupy them being always found ready. In this way nearly the whole of this great territory stretching northward to the Arctic Sea, eastward to the borders of Labrador, and westward to the Rocky Mountains was visited and occupied. But those "Rockies" were not high enough to form a barrier against these pioneers of the Cross. Over them they went to preach the Gospel in the "regions beyond," as we shall see further on.

Going northward from the head of Lake Winnipeg, the English River is reached, which, rising near the Rocky Mountains, falls at length into Hudson's Bay. Stanley, a Mission on this river, was commenced in 1845, and in a short time the Crees, natives of that region, all renounced heathenism and were received into the Church. Leaving Stanley and going to the head of English River we reach Portage La Loche, which is the water-shed of this portion of North America. From this point on, the rivers all flow northward to the Arctic Ocean. The traveller having crossed the Portage, finds himself in the basin of the great Mackenzie River, on which, in lat.  $6^{\circ} 51' 25''$  north and in  $121^{\circ} 51' 15''$  west long., stands Fort Simpson. It is distant from the Red River about 2,500 miles. The Indians who live in this district are the Tinnè or Chipewyans, a harmless and inoffensive race, and well disposed towards Christianity. There are several tribes of them, as the Hare, Dog-ribs, Yellow-knives, etc.

A Mission was begun among these tribes in 1858, and in 1859 the Rev. W. W. Kirkby made Fort Simpson the headquarters of the Mission and his permanent home, so far as it is home where the heart is, for the Missionary himself must have been seldom there. Visiting the Indians of his more immediate charge in their hunting grounds, and making long journeys to preach the Gospel to the tribes at the different trading posts, must have taken up most of his time and been a severe tax upon his strength. But he was found equal to the task and rejoiced in the work.

There came also, once a year, to Fort Simpson a party of Indians as boatmen from Fort Yukon, a trading post fully 1,000 miles northwest of Fort Simpson. These strangers soon attracted the attention of the Missionary, who took them into his own home during their annual stay of ten or fifteen days. Soon a friendly relationship was established with them, and he obtained the fullest information from them regarding their countrymen. Then a desire to see them took possession of his soul, and in the spring of 1862 he resolved to visit Fort Yukon. A suitable canoe was obtained, which he named "The Herald," two Christian Indians engaged, and as soon as the ice broke up on the Mackenzie "The Herald" was launched, and the Missionary was on his errand of love to these distant tribes.

Following the ice down the Mackenzie to the point not far from its estuary where it receives the waters of Peel River, he then ascended the latter river to Fort McPherson, a great rendezvous of the Indians, and the last house on the Continent. He thus describes his visit to that far-off spot :

"Never to weary pilgrims was home sweeter than was the sight of the Fort to us. We arrived at 5 o'clock in the morning; the sun was shining brightly, and had been doing so all night, the only observable difference between that and the day being that during the night the heat and glare were not so great. At 10 o'clock the Indians all came to Service, and were attentive and quiet. In the evening I preached to them again, and thus ended my first Sunday within the Arctic circle. Very sincerely do I thank God for the privilege given to me in being the first 'messenger of the Churches' to visit this 'uttermost part of the earth' and to plant the standard of the Cross here. God grant that it may be so planted that it shall never be taken down again until He shall come whose right it is to reign."

The two following days were employed in instructing the Indians, who continued with him from morning to night. On the 18th, leaving his canoe and the two Indians who had brought him from Fort Simpson, he set out, accompanied by two guides, to walk over the Rocky Mountains; up and down they went over several ridges rising from 700 to 2,800 feet, and at last, by a sudden descent of 1,000 feet into the valley, he reached La Pierre's House, another of the Fur Company's forts. Here Mr. Kirkby spent another Sunday. He addressed the Indians in the morning and afternoon, and had an English Service in the evening with the family of the trader in charge of the place, and his two Orkney men. With tears in his eyes this officer said, "I never thought to see the day when a Minister of the Gospel would be at La Pierre's House." Here our traveller remained till June 30th, instructing the Indians and making translations for their future use. He then embarked in the Company's boat on the Rat River, which makes its way through a rough country until it reaches the Porcupine River, a tributary of the Yukon. Mr. Kirkby thus describes his arrival at the Fort:

"July 6th, 1862—Early this morning we came to the portage, which is about two miles from the confluence of the Porcupine with the Yukon. It is a straight walk across to the Fort. Mr. Jones, the gentleman in charge of the boat, went that way, and I proposed to accompany him, but the Indians begged me to remain in the boat as they wished to take me themselves to the Fort. They also enjoined secrecy on Mr. Jones, that no one should know of my coming. In a short time we met the waters of the Yukon, a magnificent river studded with islands. We had to ascend the current to the Fort, which, though only two miles distant, took us as many hours to reach, the boats being heavily loaded. There were about 500 Indians present, all of whom were filled with astonishment and delight to see me in the boat. After shaking hands with them all, I went into the house for a season, thinking it best to allow the Indians who had been up with the boat an opportunity of first telling to their countrymen what they had heard and seen. It had been told me by the traders that it would not be safe to preach the whole law to the Indians here on account of their habits of infanticide, polygamy and shamanism. Moreover, they were said to be treacherous and blood-thirsty. It therefore became me to act with prudence, and I knew that the men of the boats would report favorably.

"After a few hours the Indians were assembled, and I went out to address them, telling them fully who I was and the object of my visit, and asked them whether they would place themselves under Christian instruction. All replied in the affirmative, and at once seated themselves on the ground to hear what I had to say. With the aid of the boatmen a hymn was sung, and all for the first time knelt in prayer. It is not claimed that all knew the full import of the act, but it was a goodly sight to see that whole band of Indians bending their knees before God and trying to lisp the name of Jesus.

"At the close of the Service the principal chief, a bold, energetic man, made a vigorous speech, and others followed. The purport of each was the same. They were glad I had come to visit them; they would be guided by my words, and would request their followers to do the same. Thus the glorious light of the Gospel of CHRIST which first dawned on the land a hundred years ago, when the Moravians established their first Mission on the shores of Labrador, had penetrated to the furthest limits of the British dominions on this Continent."

Fort Yukon is, however, no longer within the English boundary line. In 1869 the United States Government laid claim to the Fort in virtue of the treaty by which Russia ceded all the forts in the territory to America. Fort Yukon in lat.  $66^{\circ} 33'$  north and long.  $143^{\circ} 44' 10''$  is seventy-five miles west of the boundary line, and is therefore now included in the province of Alaska.

The distance of Fort Yukon from Manitoba is about 3,500 miles. It is, however, easier of access from the western side of the Rocky Mountains, and it would be comparatively easy to evangelize the tribes from that point, provided an adequate staff of Missionaries, qualified for the work, could be sent forth.

Mr. Kirkby passed two summers at Fort Yukon, and during that time had the great joy of seeing much good accomplished. The Gospel had been faithfully preached to the people, and had its legitimate effects upon them. Shamanism was publicly renounced by the great high-priest of the art. Polygamy ceased among all who were baptized into the Church, and three of the most intelligent young men were appointed as Christian leaders among their countrymen. Of course there was much yet to be accomplished. Habits of years are not usually overcome in a day, and so at the close of his second summer among them Mr. Kirkby could not resist the earnest pleadings of his young converts to visit them again the following year. He longed to teach them yet many necessary things, and things that *accompany* salvation; but God had provided for them in a way of which, at that time, neither they nor their teacher knew anything.

A month after this, reaching his home, wet with rain and late at night, Mr. Kirkby heard with deep joy that a brother Missionary had been sent by the Bishop to aid him in the work. It had been arranged for Mr. McDonald to occupy Fort Liard, the next trading post, and about 200 miles from Fort Simpson, "that," to use the Bishop's words to Mr. Kirkby, "you may be near each other and strengthen each other's hands!" But much as he would have enjoyed this, he was too mindful of his converts at the Yukon to keep Mr. McDonald so near to him, and so proposed his going at once to Alaska

to take charge of the work there. Into this proposal Mr. McDonald entered with all the zeal of a true Missionary, and instead of going to the easier post at Fort Liard, for which he had been sent, set off on his longer journey to the Yukon. He encountered a severe snow-storm in crossing the mountains, and met with much hardship from cold and hunger on the route, but reached his destination towards the end of October, 1863. The Indians gave him a hearty welcome, and he at once commenced the study of their language, feeling that to be his first duty. But this was no easy task, as the language is complicated in its construction and difficult in its pronunciation. But Mr. McDonald was equal to the task. He already knew the Cree and Salteaux tongues, and had had some experience among these tribes. The language acquired, his work was comparatively easy, and in addition to his duties at the Fort he went amongst the Indians in the surrounding country, preaching and teaching as he found opportunity. In this way the tribes down the river as far as Fort St. Michael on Norton Sound were visited, and the Gospel preached to them. A leading chief who had shown much kindness to Mr. Kirkby was most active in helping Mr. McDonald in his work. This chief died towards the close of 1866, "exhorting his people to become Christians indeed, that they might follow him to that blessed place whither he, through the SAVIOUR'S grace, felt sure he was going."

Mr. McDonald's health is now broken, and he is obliged to leave his work for a season, and it is feared forever. For nearly twenty years he has been faithful in his labors there, traversing the country from one end to the other, and carrying the Gospel to many tribes hitherto strangers to its joyful sound. It is surely a hopeful sign that nearly all listened to his teaching with attention, and to many the Holy Spirit so blessed the word spoken to their souls, as to lead them to forsake their heathen customs, and to seek admission into the Christian Church. In one tribe there is scarcely an unbaptized person left.

In his active, self-denying labors Mr. McDonald had been cheered and sustained by the Rev. W. C. Bompas, who in 1865 joined the Rev. W. W. Kirkby in the Mackenzie River Mission. After a few years of active labor there, he went to assist Mr. McDonald in carrying on his itinerating work in the Yukon district. For this he possessed unusual qualifications. He had deep piety, unbounded self-denial, and a great aptitude in acquiring languages. The work thus grew and prospered, and in 1874 Mr. Bompas returned to England, where on May 3d he was consecrated to the Bishopric of Athabasca, and returned that same year to his new field of labor. This took him from the Yukon, except to make visitations, hold confirmations, etc.

Thus was Mr. McDonald again left alone with his unequal task until 1882, when his health gave way, and in September of that year he writes to his friend of former days, Archdeacon Kirkby, thus :

"I have done very little active work during the past year. I endeavored to keep up the Sunday Services, but lately have had to give up one of them on account of the exhaustion and suffering that followed. But I am thankful for being enabled to do something at the translations, and have now reached Rev. ii., and hope to complete the New Testament by March. A careful revis-

ion of the whole will then have to be made. Should my health improve I may pass next winter at Naklukayit. This would give me an opportunity of translating the Gospels into the dialect spoken by the Indians there."

Mr. McDonald has now left the district, and hopes to visit England to superintend the printing of the New Testament, Prayer Book and Hymnal in the Tukudh language. Portions of these have been in use for years, and it is hoped that Mr. McDonald will be spared to complete the translations. The Rev. Mr. Sim was added to the corps of workers in the fall of 1882 and settled at the Rampart House. Besides these Clergymen there are native Christian leaders who assisted in teaching. One of these in the spring of 1882 went on a Mission to the Nun-Kwitchin and Tayek-Kwitchin, 250 miles up the Yukon above the Fort, where he found all the people anxious to learn, and left books with them. Over eighty offered themselves for Baptism, and it is hoped they will be received into the Church by Mr. Sim on his next visit.

There are over 1,600 members of the Church on the Yukon, besides those at Fort McPherson and La Pierre House. This is the result of Mr. McDonald's work at these stations. Mr. Sim is now in charge of this Mission with his band of native leaders, and visited by the Bishop of Athabasca about every other year.

Here, then, in as small a compass as possible is the field, its past history and its present condition; a few Greek Priests, whose congregations are decreasing by removals and will eventually die out; eight or ten Presbyterians, men and women, who confine their labors to Sitka and Fort Wrangel, and have enough to do there; and one Clergyman of the Church of England on a river 2,500 miles long, whose banks from end to end are his parish; 11,000 members of the Greek Church, 700 or 800 Presbyterians and between 2,000 and 3,000 Church of England folk familiar with her Services and loving her ritual; and at the very least calculation 5,500 natives that might be reached and cared for, and *should* be cared for, by our Church. No Church has the claim upon the Indians there that the Church of England has, but she ought not to be asked to do work that belongs to us. If a Bishop and four Clergymen, with at least \$12,000 per annum, could be secured for Alaska, and these men could get into the field and take possession before *whiskey* settles there and the people are demoralized by it, there might be a work done among these Indians equal to that in the Fiji Islands, and in as short a time. Here is a chance to show the people of America that the Church does know how to deal with the Indian question. There will be a clear field and no favor for several years to come. A fund of \$15,000, appropriated by Congress in 1878 for educational purposes, but never called for, might be claimed by any party proving to Congress by their works that they meant to educate the people. A government of some sort, military perhaps, will soon be established. Prospectors after everything valuable will overrun the country as soon as it is safe and profitable to do so. The denominations are gradually waking up to the fact that here is a Missionary prize package for the first one that shall open it. The Church of England is ready and anxious to make over her work entire to us. Let the House of Bishops, the General Convention and the whole Church look into

this matter, and for once determine to be first in the field with proper equipment. There will be no trouble about the men or the money, and even though the new Bishop should have "no Cathedral, no staff of Clergy and no endowment," he could have a good support, a steam yacht and a dozen dog teams, and with these, if he were the right man in *body* as well as in spirit, he could convert that world.

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